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Dear Friends,

Another week in Washington has been dominated by the debate on raising the federal debt ceiling. I believe that continuing on our current fiscal path is unsustainable and irresponsible. We will not fix our debt crisis overnight, but we must change course now rather than simply kicking the can further down the road.

Let me put our current debt situation in perspective. It took our nation 216 years and 41 presidents to accumulate our first \$3.7 trillion in debt. It took President Obama less than two and a half years to accumulate the same amount of debt. Our total federal debt is now at \$14.3 trillion, which is equal to roughly \$46,000 in debt for every man, woman and child in the United States. This year, the federal government is borrowing about 40 cents of every single dollar it spends. This is simply unsustainable.

Next week, the House of Representatives will take a step toward fixing the structural problems that have led to this run away debt by voting on the [Cut, Cap and Balance Act](#) . This bill cuts \$111 billion in federal spending in fiscal year 2012. The bill caps federal spending at 19.9% of GDP, the historical average level of federal spending since World War II. Lastly, the bill requires that a Constitutional amendment requiring a balanced budget be passed by Congress and sent to the states for ratification before any increase in the debt ceiling goes into effect. This bill is not perfect, and does not accomplish everything that must be done to rein in federal spending, but I believe it is a reasonable first step that would be a significant change in course. I look forward to supporting the Cut, Cap and Balance Act next week in the House.

Also this week, I participated in a [House Budget Committee hearing](#) on the Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB) which was created by President Obama's health care bill. The IPAB is comprised of fifteen un-elected bureaucrats who will be able to cut Medicare without the support or approval of Congress. IPAB is just another example of what is wrong with Obama's healthcare bill--instead of empowering individuals to make choices about their own healthcare, it gives that power to un-elected bureaucrats. For this and many more reasons, we should repeal President Obama's healthcare bill and replace it with something that is patient-centric and encourages the free market to work.

Lastly, this week I led a letter from most of the Missouri delegation calling for hearings on how the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has managed or potentially mis-managed the Missouri River. The Missouri River is an important resource for our state and our country, and it should be managed with a focus on flood-control and transportation. You can [read my letter here](#) . I also [spoke on the House floor](#) in support of an amendment that would prohibit funds from going to the Missouri River Authorized Purposes Study (MRAPS). A 17 year, \$35 million study on this same issue was just completed. It makes no sense to do the same study over again at the cost of another \$25 million. This is simply unacceptable.

It is an honor to serve you in Washington. Please do not hesitate to contact me via [email](#) , [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#) , and please consider sharing this email with others who may be interested.

Sincerely,

W. Todd Akin